

## **THE INFLUENCE OF PROBLEM SOLVING, TEAMWORK, AND LEADERSHIP ON STUDENT'S READINESS FOR EMPLOYEMENT**

**Fanny Dwi azzahra<sup>1</sup>, Winda Ratnasari<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business,  
University of Pamulang

[fannydwiazzh@gmail.com](mailto:fannydwiazzh@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the influence of problem solving, teamwork, and leadership skills on students' readiness for employment. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected using questionnaires distributed to student respondents. The collected data were processed using SPSS software. The results indicated an  $R^2$  value of 0.242, meaning the independent variables explain 24.2% of the variation in students' readiness for employment. The simultaneous F-test showed that these three variables collectively have a significant effect on readiness for employment ( $F = 10.348$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, partial t-test revealed that only problem solving has a positive and nearly significant effect ( $p = 0.068$ ), while teamwork and leadership do not have a significant impact. The regression equation derived is  $Y = 8.233 + 0.381X_1 - 0.051X_2 + 0.209X_3$ . The study concludes that problem solving is a key factor in enhancing student readiness for employment, while practical experience in teamwork and leadership should be improved to achieve a significant impact. These three variables collectively form a foundation for students' readiness to join the contemporary workforce.

**Keywords:** Problem solving, Teamwork, Leadership, Employment.

### **Introduction**

The transition from academic life to the workforce is a critical phase for students, where readiness for employment determines their successful integration into professional environments. In today's dynamic and competitive job market, employers increasingly emphasize skills such as problem solving, teamwork, and leadership as essential competencies for new graduates. These core skills not only enhance individual performance but also contribute to organizational effectiveness and adaptability. Numerous studies have documented the importance of these skills for instance, interpersonal skills and problem solving have been highlighted as key contributors to effective leadership (Sagala & Suarni, 2020). Additionally, social and emotional learning, which encompasses teamwork and problem-solving skills, has been shown to prepare students effectively for the evolving labour market (Durlak et al., 2011). Furthermore, leadership capabilities influence decision-making and

performance outcomes significantly (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013). Given this context, it is imperative to understand how these skills influence students' preparedness to enter the workforce.

This study aims to analyse the impact of problem solving, teamwork, and leadership on students' readiness for employment, employing a quantitative approach with data collected through questionnaires and analysed using SPSS software. The significance of this research lies in providing empirical evidence on key skill factors that educational institutions and policymakers can focus on to better prepare students for the demands of modern employment. By identifying the degree to which these variables affect readiness, the study offers insights into targeted interventions for enhancing graduate employability. Ultimately, this article contributes to the broader discourse on bridging the gap between academic training and labour market expectations, addressing a vital concern for higher education and workforce development stakeholders.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Students readiness for employment refers to the ability of individuals to apply their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enter and adapt to the workplace. Yorke (2018) defined work readiness as a combination of cognitive, social, and affective competencies that enable individuals to function effectively in professional environments. According to Jackson (2019), problem-solving ability is a core employability skill that reflects ones critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and decision-making capacity. Students with strong problem solving skills are generally more prepared to face the challenges of the modern workplace. Beigi and Shirmohammadi (2017) stated that effective teamwork plays a vital role in enhancing employability since todays industries require cross-functional collaboration. Furthermore, Succi and Canovi (2019) found that employers tend to recruit graduates who demonstrate high levels of cooperation and interpersonal communication within a team. Pitam and Muller (2019) argued that leadership signifies professional maturity, initiative, and the ability to motivate others. Similarly, Robles (2020) found that empathetic and communicative leadership has a positive correlation with students' work readiness. This study is grounded in Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993) and Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which explain that education and social experiences contribute to the development of work-related competencies. However, previous studies have rarely examined the simultaneous influence of problem solving, teamwork, and leadership on students readiness for employment within the context of higher education in Indonesia. This gap motivates the present study. H1 : Problem Solving has a positive effect on Students Readiness for Employment. H2 : Teamwork has a positive effect on Students' Readiness for Employment. H3 : Leadership has a positive effect on Students' Readiness for Employment. H4 : Problem Solving, Teamwork, and Leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on Students' Readiness for Employment.

## Method

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a survey design to analyze the influence of problem solving, teamwork, and leadership on student readiness for employment. The sample consists of 101 students selected through purposive sampling based on specific criteria.

Data collection was carried out via the distribution of questionnaires designed to measure the variables of problem solving, teamwork, leadership, and employment readiness. Respondents completed the questionnaires directly to ensure the accuracy of the data collected.

Subsequently, the data was processed using SPSS software. The analysis included descriptive statistics to outline respondent characteristics and variable distributions, as well as inferential statistics such as correlation and multiple regression to examine the relationships between the variables.

## Results

This study involved 101 active student respondents, of whom 71.1% were employed full time, 23.1% engaged in part time work, and 5.7% were not currently employed.

**Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Test**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	8.233	2.013		4.089	.000
PROBLEM SOLVING	.381	.206	.352	1.845	.068
TEAMWORK	-.051	.173	-.048	-.293	.770
LEADERSHIP	.209	.209	.198	1.001	.319

The regression results indicate that problem solving has a positive but not significant effect on student's readiness for employment (Sig. = 0.068). Teamwork shows a negative and insignificant effect (Sig. = 0.770), while leadership has a positive but insignificant effect (Sig. = 0.319). Among these variables, problem solving is the most influential factor, suggesting that students with stronger problem-solving skills tend to be better prepared for employment.

**Table 2. Simultaneous F-test**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	659.394	3	219.798	10.348	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	2060.309	97	21.240		
Total	2719.703	100			

The f-test result shows an f-value of 10.348 with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05). This means that the independent variables problem solving, teamwork, and leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on students readiness for employment. In other words, the regression model is valid and can explain the variation in students work readiness.

**Table 3. Partial T-test**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	8.233	2.013		4.089	.000
PROBLEM SOLVING	.381	.206	.352	1.845	.068
TEAMWORK	-.051	.173	-.048	-.293	.770
LEADERSHIP	.209	.209	.198	1.001	.319

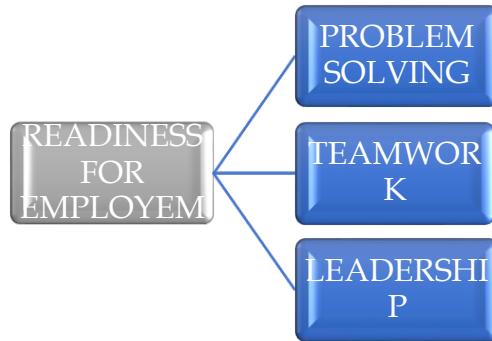
The partial t-test results show that problem solving has a positive but not significant effect on students readiness for employment (Sig. = 0.068 > 0.05). Teamwork has a negative and insignificant effect (Sig. = 0.770 > 0.05), while leadership shows a positive but also insignificant effect (Sig. = 0.319 > 0.05).

This means that individually, none of the independent variables have a statistically significant effect on student's readiness for employment, although problem solving remains the most influential variable among them.

**Table 4. Coefficient of Determination R<sup>2</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.492 <sup>a</sup>	.242	.219	4.609

The R value of 0.492 indicates a moderate correlation between problem solving, teamwork, and leadership with student's readiness for employment. The R square value of 0.242 means that 24.2% of the variation in students readiness for employment can be explained by the three independent variables, while the remaining 75.8% is influenced by other factors not included in this model.



H1: Problem solving has a positive effect on Students Readiness for employment.  
 H2: Teamwork has a positive effect on Students readiness for employment.  
 H3: Leadership has a positive effect on Students readiness for employment.  
 H4: Problem solving, teamwork, and leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on student's readiness for employment.

## Discussion

This study confirms that problem solving, teamwork, and leadership collectively influence students' readiness for employment, aligning with recent findings in Indonesia (Khairudin & I'fa, 2023; Ariasepta, 2022). The significant overall effect supports the theoretical framework that integrated soft skills enhance employability (Bandura, 1997; Becker, 1993).

Problem solving showed a positive but marginally insignificant effect, consistent with studies highlighting its crucial role in navigating complex work environments (Khairudin & I'fa, 2023). The nonsignificant impact of teamwork and leadership may relate to limited hands-on experience among students, as noted in related research (Ward et al., 2020). This underscores the need for experiential learning to boost these competencies.

Practically, the results suggest universities should intensify development of problem-solving skills and provide opportunities for practical teamwork and leadership training, responding to Indonesia's shifting labor market demands in the industrial revolution 4.0 era (Ariasepta, 2022).

Limitations include the self-reported data and sample restricted to current students. Future research could expand the population and examine additional skills like digital literacy and self-efficacy, which also affect employability (Khairudin & I'fa, 2023; Ariasepta, 2022).

## Conclusion

This study comprehensively analyzes the influence of problem solving, teamwork, and leadership on students' readiness for employment within the Indonesian higher education context, revealing that these combined competencies

significantly predict employability, with problem solving being the most influential factor despite its marginal statistical significance. The findings align with recent scholarly works emphasizing the critical role of integrated soft skills in navigating contemporary labor market demands and advancing human capital development. While teamwork and leadership demonstrated no significant individual effects – likely due to limited practical experience among students – these results highlight the imperative for curricular emphasis on experiential learning to enhance such competencies. Limitations include the homogeneous sample and self-reported nature of the data, suggesting the need for future studies to adopt longitudinal and diversified methodologies, also exploring additional competencies such as digital literacy and self-efficacy to further elucidate the multifaceted nature of employability readiness.

the conclusion should succinctly summarize the key findings of the study, highlighting its contributions to both the academic field and practical applications. Authors may also outline the study's limitations and provide recommendations for future research.

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